

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
Peterborough, New Hampshire

CONTOOCOOK VALLEY SCHOOL BOARD

School Board Budget Work Session
SAU BOARD ROOM

NO PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Saturday, November 6, 2021

8:30 a.m.

MINUTES

BOARD

Rich Cahoon, Keira Christian,
Richard Dunning, Alan Edelkind,
Jim Fredrickson, Katherine Heck,
Greg Kriebel, Janine Lesser,
Kevin Pobst, Liz Swan,
Tim Theberge, Stephen Ullman,
Jerome Wilson

ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Kimberly Saunders, Supt.
Dr. Ann Forrest, Asst. Supt.
Tim Grossi, Facilities
Mark Schaub, Technology
Carrie James, H.R.
Ben Moenter, Special Ed.
Tim Conway, SMS
Kat Foecking, GBS
Beth Gibney, Pierce/FES
Larry Pimental, PES
Fabi Woods, TES
Stephanie Syre-Hager, AES
Nicole Pease, DCS
Heather McKillop, CVHS

8:30 – 9:00 - Welcome & Breakfast

Tim Welcomed everyone to today's meeting.

Jim Fredrickson referenced a handout titled "ConVal - Projected Costs FY23-25"

Dr. Kimberly Saunders spoke about the Reopening, Recovery, and Resiliency phases as the concepts that are holding.

The Budget Prep Timeline began in September with the rollout. From there, review and revisions were made followed by today, the Board Budget Workshop.

Financial budget assumptions include a proposed budget not to exceed a 2% increase.

Challenges include a health insurance rate increase of 9.3%, transportation contract increase of 3.0%, a reduction in bond interest, and budgeting to maximum exposure including the anticipated return of students. In terms of revenue, a decrease in adequacy is anticipated.

The proposed operating budget, absent the CVEA Contract, is \$51,519.025, which is an increase of \$372,949, or .7% increase.

Gross Budget and District Assessment were reviewed. Gross budget includes all expenditures and anticipated revenues. Anticipated revenues include an increase from ESSER funds.

The Proposed Revenue lines were reviewed.

Salaries are proposed to decrease by \$1,049,886, which is a 4.05% decrease.
As a result, benefits are down by 10.11%, or \$413,573.

Professional Services are up \$846,377, or 25.04%, as a result of pupil services increases and contracted custodial services.

Property Services are down \$57,071, or 4.70%.

Other purchased services are up \$229,672, or 5.38%, which reflects an increase to transportation, increase in tuition, property insurance, and a savings on phone and internet service.

Supplies and materials are up \$443,784, or 16.58%. This reflects software, propane for buses, heating fuel, and district improvement supplies.

Furniture and equipment are up \$349,694, or 50.16%. This reflects a vehicle, mowers, a dump trailer, replacement chrome books, and furnishings to complete science rooms.

Dues and fees, debt service is up \$9,345, or 2.67%. This represents reduced bond interest and budgeting for planned food service loss.

Recommendations, not included in the proposed budget, were outlined.

The final phase of preschool in three options were highlighted. A high school science position, student information system personnel, school resource officer, and elementary school integration personnel make up the recommendation.

Other consideration includes the possibility of an expendable trust for long-term technology investment, use of trusts, consideration for future bonds to renovate middle schools, and additional CIP Projects.

Rich Cahoon asked why the current equipment trust could not be used for technology.

Kimberly Saunders said that the goal is to keep costs steady. The up and down costs of technology result in the budgeting and trust use for this purpose.

Katherine Heck said that creating an expendable trust for technology will better inform the voters that these are associated with student instruction.

Rich Cahoon said that technology in the classrooms is something that we are going to do but it has a target on its back. The more trusts we have the order they appear on the warrant is of concern.

9:00 – 9:15 - **Non-Public Session RSA 91-A:3 II**
- **Negotiations**
- **Personnel**

Katherine Heck moved to enter into Non-Public Session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3 II at 9:19 a.m. for matters of negotiation and personnel. Rich Cahoon second. Unanimous on a roll call vote.

Katherine Heck moved to exit Non-Public Session at 10:10 a.m. Jerry Wilson second. Unanimous. Kevin Pobst moved to seal the minutes of Non-Public Session for a period of five years. Jerry Wilson second. Unanimous.

Kevin Pobst shared that he did a quick cost per pupil calculation for PES and FES and they are not far off. Kimberly Saunders said that a number of items are not in the costs e.g. transportation, special education costs.

9:15 – 9:45 - **FY'23 Budget Work Session** – Kimberly Saunders
- Overview of Materials
- FY'23 Administration Recommendation Review

9:45 – 12:30 - **Discussion**

The *Preschool for All* options were shared and reviewed.

Ben Moenter said that one classroom was added last year. All of the options proposed involve the addition of an SLP and OT. Further phases have additional recommendations. The least expensive option is going to 6 classrooms, then 7, and then 8. Eight would support 125 students. With five classrooms we are working toward 75 students. We continue to enroll students.

Rich Cahoon said that special education students over the age of three are required. Therefore, additional students would reflect potential increases. Why additional services for regular education students. Ben Moenter said that they support all students.

Kimberly Saunders said that those that will access this program will likely be those with the greatest need.

Rich Cahoon asked the total staffing for 120 students. Seven teachers, 7 paras, 7 part-time paras, 2 school psychologists, 2 SLP's, 2 OT's, and one social worker. Two case managers as well. 26 FTE's total.

Janine Lesser said that when looking for students with the greatest need, students of this age group are likely not yet diagnosed. Janine said that Pre-K has been at the top of the list of the bill that is trying to be passed. How would these funds be used if passed? Kimberly Saunders said that the legislation proposes that the State would be responsible for 50% of preschool funding if passed.

Jim Fredrickson asked about location. Where would the additional students go; PES, HES, and GES.

Rich Cahoon said that he has supported preschool from the beginning but he has a problem with the number. The staff to student ratio would be 1:4.5.

Discussion took place about the programs that we have and the support needed. The Rand Study was noted. What is the total cost of preschool program in FY'22-23? \$1.95M would be total cost for alternative one, \$1.7M for alternative two, and \$1.5M for alternative three.

When looking at category codes, where are costs assigned to? Preschool remains in the district budget and not the schools in which they are in.

Adding a classroom for capacity rather than additional services for fewer students was suggested. Ben Moenter said that having dedicated related services in the program for all students was the aim, not just special education students. They would be dedicated to the preschool program.

Rich said that he was always for the program but more about access for more students. Hiring one teacher for an additional classroom and eliminating services for others with fewer students was seen as more positive.

Are the figures inclusive of transportation? No, the estimates do not include transportation.

Discussion took place about the potential target number of 120 preschool students. Current capacity is 75 and we have 60+ preschool students. Projected enrollment for next year is 62 students.

Rich wanted to know more about the changed argument that will be needed to address the public. The program was pitched on greater access.

If an additional classroom were added to increase access, where would it be added?

Kevin Pobst asked to hear more about the high school science teacher proposal. Kimberly said that it is driven around not being able to meet the demand.

Advanced Placement Courses run alternating years. This would allow students to have more choices.

Katherine Heck asked for VLACs information for both science and math.

It was noted that Biology Topics will not exist beyond the current year.

Rich Cahoon said that he supported adding this position back into the budget.

Physical Science, Living Science, and one additional science are required to graduate.

Jim Fredrickson said that \$127K should be moved to the equipment trust, add world language in, add Preschool in at the lowest level, add science, do not include the School Resource Officer, and adding others would leave the budget still under budget target.

Science electives eliminated in recent years were a result of moving students into other courses in the earth and space sciences. This position would be a life science teacher, likely a biology or chemistry teacher.

Student Information Systems Personnel - Mark Schaub spoke about the present state at ConVal. The District has been extending capabilities to allow for additional functionality e.g. parents can enroll students in ConVal electronically, eForms to collect student information, adaptive scheduler which allows students to engage in flexible scheduling, device manager for technology inventory management. This is across the district in all schools.

This position would fall under the technology team. This position was requested five years ago and needs have existed during this time. Modules developed for PowerSchool rather than other modules were favored as part of this model.

How are these means being met currently? The tech team has stepped up and worked a lot. This position would take on this work.

If this position was approved, would SNAP be replaced by a PowerSchool program? Mark Schaub said that it depends. Ways to increase the two-way communication would be looked at. A PowerSchool module, if one exists, would be the first option before going to another. Confirmed.

School Resource Officer (SRO) -

Kevin Pobst said that he was an outright "no" on this issue.

Stephan Ullman said that this should be a separate warrant.

The third option is that this goes in the budget.

A proposed SRO has been put forward before, what is different now?

Kimberly Saunders shared that it had passed once before but the board rejected the MOU. Outside of that history, successful SRO programs are an excellent resource for high schools.

Kevin Pobst shared his appreciation for police officers but spoke about the impact on those in charge of discipline in his experience.

Rich Cahoon said that he would like to see the MOU negotiated in advance of placing it on the warrant if that is the route decided.

Interest in hearing from the high school was shared to allow more information on the topic. Interest in hearing from the Peterborough Police Department was also seen as valuable.

Kimberly Saunders proposed starting the next two School Board meetings to allow time for presentation. Sharing the extent of what this position would look like was asked and not a full-blown presentation.

Rich Cahoon moved that any SRO proposal be for the high school only. Keira Christian second. Unanimous.

12:30- 1:00 - Lunch

1:00 – - Discussion (Cont'd)/Additional Considerations

Jerry Wilson exited the meeting at 12:00 p.m. as did most administration.

Rich Cahoon proposed the additional consideration that administration does not have a lot of time.

Stephen Ullman moved to inform the administration that the board will reject an SRO at CVHS. Kevin Pobst second.

Katherine Heck asked if it is worth amending the motion to consider an alternative to the SRO. Kimberly said that she could talk to the administration about optional resources.

Rich Cahoon would like to see a proposal to address behavioral concerns that do not involve police.

Kevin Pobst said that his opposition is to police in schools.

Rich said that the Culture Monitor position was around student behavior. Maybe it should exist again.

Administration is welcome to provide an alternative to address the concerns. Confirmed.

Alan Edelkind was opposed. All others in favor. Motion carried.

Keira Christian moved to accept the resignation as discussed. Kevin Pobst second. Unanimous.

Rich Cahoon asked to return to the IT Trust rather than using the existing equipment trust. Confirmed.

Rich said that we did purchase networking equipment from the equipment trust. There is precedent to use the trust in this way.

Mark Schaub distributed information related to the Chromebook Cycle. Based on the number of new chrome books purchased with remote learning, do we not need to start that cycle right away?

Using newer devices to replace and prevent certain classes from using a five-year-old Chromebook. Some of the elementary chrome books could be used in middle school.

We did not extend 1 to 1 chrome books to kindergarten.

Would adopting this proposal increase access to devices or would it be the same amount of screen time but just not in the labs.

The main reason for bringing a technology integration specialist forward is if we are bringing technology into the classroom we want it to be pedagogically sound. If you can do the same work without a computer you should do so.

The suggestion is to establish a technology trust fund. It would expand and be funded for specific needs.

The equipment fund has a traditional use.

How would it be interpreted if it was voted down on the warrant? It would be interpreted that the voters did not want another trust fund.

The other option is to increase the equipment trust by \$50K if that is what would be placed in it.

Kevin Pobst asked if functions of technology needs could be contracted. Kimberly Saunders sited a fine line when dealing with confidentiality.

Katherine Heck asked if we continue with technology can we require that third graders be competent with typing. She asked that it be a competency-based requirement.

Kimberly Saunders said that *Keyboarding without Tears* could be implemented into classroom work rather than just the library. Ann Forrest agreed to look into it.

Rich Cahoon spoke about increasing things into the day without increasing time in the day. Something has to be given up to get.

Trust Funds -

Guidance on the warrant article to get the Special Education Trust to \$500K was provided last year.

Solar Energy should be first on the warrant to allow the district to buy out eventually.

Jim Fredrickson suggested bringing a full package to the next board meeting.

Discussion took place about staying with \$250K consistently in a warrant for unreserved fund balance.

Rich Cahoon asked if extra funds were provided to save energy, where would it be spent? Tim Grossi said that every room at CVHS that can be lit with LED lighting are. It is the same at both middle schools and all elementary schools for a savings of tens of thousands of dollars. The boiler project and oil projects will result in some savings. The big grab would be LED completion at both middle schools and the high school. If renovations will be made at the middle schools it does not make sense to pursue at this time.

The payback on LED lighting is fourteen months. If there is no plan to renovate the middle schools during the next fourteen months the work should be pursued.

What facility has the capacity to staff for upgrades is important to consider.

How serious is the district about putting forth a bond? Very serious. A warrant for architectural planning should precede a bond warrant.

In the past, it has taken more than one attempt to pass a bond.

When considering an ATC renovation bond, customization will be essential.

Placing architectural services on the upcoming warrant or budget was recommended. Or, use trust funds.

Kimberly Saunders and Lori Schmidt will look at the structure of the trust language to see if funds could be used for architectural and engineering study.

Is the spike in water rates continuing? Tim Grossi reported that the irrigation system for athletic fields has not been used this year. Water consumption has decreased as a result of work done with flushometers and other work.

Geese mitigation was discussed. Options will be investigated.

- **Final Thoughts**
- **Next Steps**

- **Non-Public Session: RSA 91-A: 3, II**

a. Legal

None.

Jim Fredrickson motioned to adjourn at 1:44 p.m. Katherine Heck second. Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Marschok